



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
&
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
M E M O R A N D U M**

DATE: July 18, 2008
TO: Ray Giometti, Planning Commission Chair
Members of the Planning Commission
FROM: Kris Sorensen, Assistant Planner
SUBJECT: CPA# 2008-M-02: Business District Overlays

DESCRIPTION

A part of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Commercial Arterial Business District Overlay is the proposal to expand one of the current overlays and create two new overlays in Commercial Corridor areas by amending the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element and adding objectives and policies for these areas. This proposal is to create new Business Districts around Bronson Way North / Sunset Boulevard North and in the recently annexed Benson Hill community around the Southeast 176th Avenue and 108th Avenue Southeast. Additionally, there is a proposed expansion of the Rainier Business District Boundaries.

All three of these areas have parcels with high development and redevelopment potential. Property owners in these areas, including those with large developable parcels, have shown interest in the overlay, especially with the option of creating higher density mixed use projects where the overlay allows a significantly higher residential allowance than the underlying Commercial Arterial zone.

Also as a housekeeping matter, the Puget Drive Business District had been accidentally left out of the Comprehensive Plan Land Use element when it was last updated and needs to be put back in. Development standards for Puget currently exist in the Municipal Code.

ISSUE SUMMARY

1. What is the City's Vision for Business Districts?
2. Should the Business District Overlay be created for the Commercial Corridor area along Bronson Way North and Sunset Boulevard North?
3. Should the Business District Overlay be created for the Commercial Corridor area around Benson Hill?
4. Should the Rainier Business District Overlay be expanded?
5. The Puget Drive Business District map and policies were not included in the last Comprehensive Plan and need to be replaced as part of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Business District Overlay should be applied to the Benson Commercial Corridor area around 108th Avenue Southeast and South 180th Street. The Overlay boundaries and supportive text should be added to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use element.
- The Business District Overlay should be applied to the Bronson Way and Sunset Boulevard North commercial corridor area. The Overlay boundaries and supportive text should be added to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use element.
- The Rainier Business District Overlay boundaries should be expanded to encourage the redevelopment of properties to implement the purpose of the District which is *“to strengthen and enhance the commercial environment in order to increase revenue of local businesses and the City’s tax base, and to enhance the residential market with high-density mixed-use projects in order to increase residential opportunities in the City”* (Comprehensive Plan Objective LU-RRR).
- The Puget Drive Business District map, boundaries and policies that previously existed in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element should be put back into the Land Use Element as part of this amendment process.

ANALYSIS

Issue One – What is the City’s Vision for Business Districts as implemented through the Business District Overlay?

Through the Comprehensive Plan, the City has set policies to direct future business and residential growth to Centers and Corridors. This growth will be focused on the Urban Center and to mixed-use areas like Business Districts created outside of the downtown. These policies:

- *Encourage maximum land efficiency, even outside the Urban Center, and strive for development that is more intense than typical ‘suburban’ prototypes* (page II-1),
- *Foster the balance of urban rather than suburban development patterns* (page II-3), and
- *Encourage higher density mixed-use development in selected areas of the Commercial Corridor designation* (page II-3).

These *“selected areas are to function as living / working / entertainment nodes for the smaller community areas of the City they are within”* (page II-3). The idea for these selected areas, including Business Districts, is that more population density near services will create more vital, vibrant, and sustainable commercial areas that serve surrounding neighborhoods and sub-regional markets due to an increase of consumers.

The Commercial Corridor Land Use designation is implemented with different commercial zones including Commercial Arterial (CA). The CA zone is the underlying

zone in Business Districts and is “*characterized by concentrated pre-existing commercial activity, primarily in linear form, that provides necessary goods and services for daily living, accessible to near-by neighborhoods, serving a sub-regional market and accommodating large volumes of traffic*” (p. IX-56). Further, it is the intention of City objectives and policies that Business Districts “*evolve from ‘strip commercial’ linear business districts to business areas characterized by enhanced site planning incorporating efficient parking lot design, coordinated access, amenities, and boulevard treatment*” (p. IX-56).

This more intensive use of land is expected to result in a development pattern that is urban in its nature rather than the generally suburban development that currently exists on Rainier Avenue South. Suburban development being more linear and characterized by single-story strip commercial, rather than an urban development pattern characterized by multi-story, mixed-use development patterns with structures that define streets instead of being substantially setback from sidewalks. This type of higher density development is appropriate for designated business districts in the City.

These districts are located in areas that are outside the designated urban center, but serve as centralized nodes of commerce for the neighborhoods that surround them. An allowed density of 60-du/acre helps to foster re-development of these designated business districts with mixed-use projects that can develop with urban characteristics. This fulfills elements expressed in the Comprehensive Plan Vision section, where “*current policies of the Comprehensive Plan direct future growth to the Urban Center, the core of an economically healthy, working city, and to mixed-use areas created outside of the downtown*” (page II-1).

Attachment A is a list of related Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies that guide the implementation of the Business District Overlay. These policies guide the development standards (Renton Municipal Code 4-3-040) for new projects in these overlay areas, where the purpose of district regulations are to:

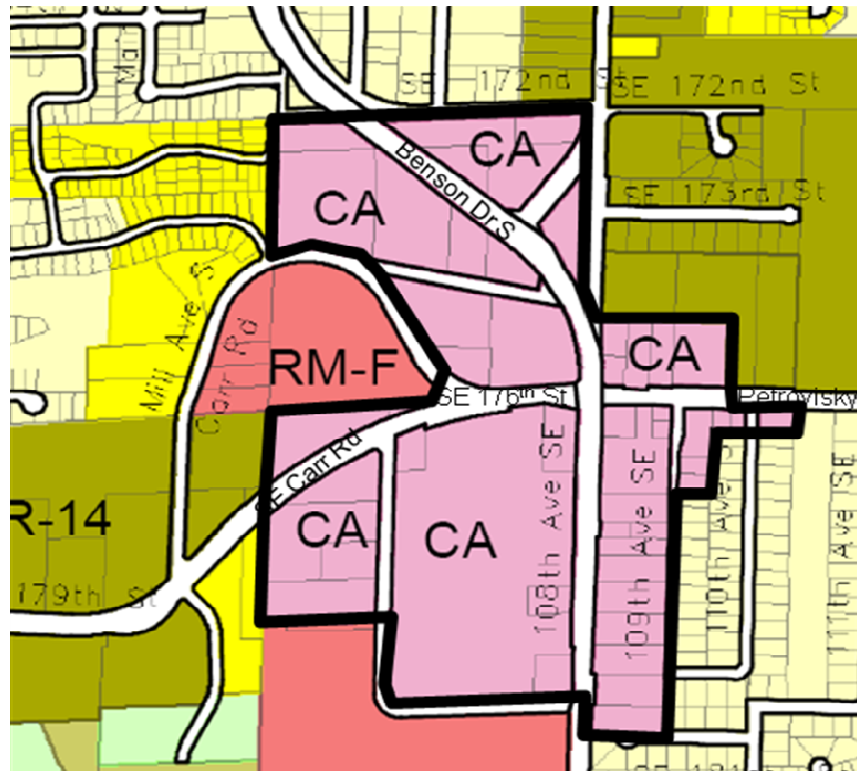
- Guide the redevelopment of strip commercial urban forms into more concentrated urban forms,
- Provide for design guidelines for residential development within the district,
- Enhance the pedestrian environment,
- Make the commercial environment more attractive,
- Improve the City’s tax base, and
- Result in a more successful business district.

Issue Two – Should the Business District Overlay be created for the Commercial Corridor area along Bronson Way North and Sunset Boulevard North?

The Benson Hill Commercial Corridor area is reflective of the other Business Districts in the City where there is currently lower intensity commercial development set back from the main arterials, where lot coverage of structures are less intense than what is currently allowed, and where surface lot parking is the dominant feature among other similarities.

The area is also reflective of other districts where higher intensity uses and higher densities should be encouraged as it is a commercial point served by transit and high volume traffic that provides services to local and sub-regional shoppers.

Proposed district boundary: The boundaries for the proposed Benson Business District are to include the Commercial Arterial zoned properties in the vicinity of the Southeast 176th Street and 108th Avenue Southeast intersection. This boundary would include all commercial properties north of Southeast 180th Street and south of Southeast 172nd Street. Boundaries are shown below on the general vicinity map with the solid line around the Commercial Arterial zoned properties.



Attributes of the area: Topographically from the west, the land slopes up, gaining in elevation and generally flattens along the edge of 108th Avenue Southeast going east. There are some residential only parcels, being single family and multi-family housing along 109th Ave Southeast and three apartment complexes along the southwest and northwest boundary corners. The largest shopping center area is anchored by Fred Meyer to the west of 108th Avenue Southeast. Of all the commercial space, a majority is retail space followed by self storage, services, office space, and community and public facilities. Most commercial structures are one story with a few multi-story buildings used for offices. There is a new Fire Station at the southeast corner of the proposed boundaries. Larger parcels are located in the northern and southwestern sections of the area being considered. Smaller parcels, especially along 108th Avenue Southeast, are dominated by fast food restaurants. Undeveloped properties are located in the northern

area. The area is surrounded by other zoning designations, including Residential-8, Residential-10, Residential-14, and Residential Multi Family.

The two main traffic arterials carry a significant amount of daily traffic. The City's 2006 bidirectional average daily traffic counts for the area:

- SE 180th Street south of SE 176th St: 26,000
- Benson Drive South (SR 515) north of SE 176th St: 17,600
- Benson Road South: 18,200
- Carr Road South/SE 176th St: 31,100

The creation of a Business District in the area is supported by the following:

- Commercial corridor land use designation
- Fits with Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies
- Development and redevelopment potential
- High traffic counts
- The City wants to create a Business District Overlay in this area
- Property owners are interested in the Overlay
- Commercial uses support local and sub-regional customers
- Served by transit
- Gateway to the city

Properties to be included: There are 48 parcels to be included in this Business District Overlay. Where some properties do not have addresses as they have not been developed with a building that has an address, the parcel number has been used. The following is a list of the properties to be included in the overlay:

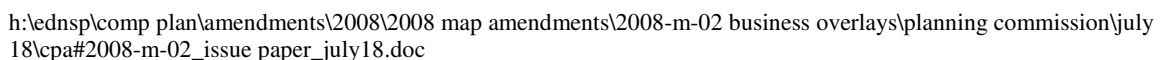
- 10405 SE 172ND ST
- Parcel 2923059134
- 10406 SE 174TH ST
- 10636 SE 174TH ST
- Parcel 2923059178
- 10700 SE 174TH ST
- Parcel 2923059009
- Parcel 2923059148
- 10717 SE 172ND ST
- Parcel 2923059174
- Parcel 2923059115
- 17422 BENSON DR SE
- 17426 BENSON DR SE
- 10810 SE 176TH ST
- 10828 SE 176TH ST
- 10900 SE 176TH ST
- 17604 110TH AVE SE
- Parcel 3223059205

- 10915 SE 176TH ST
- 10909 SE 176TH ST
- 17622 109TH AVE SE
- 17628 109TH AVE SE
- 17604 108TH AVE SE
- Parcel 3223059132
- 10827 SE 176TH ST
- 17622 108TH AVE SE
- 17630 108TH AVE SE
- 17636 108TH AVE SE
- 17655 109TH AVE SE
- 17642 108TH AVE SE
- 17661 109TH AVE SE
- 17808 108TH AVE SE
- 17816 108TH AVE SE
- 17826 108TH AVE SE
- 17832 108TH AVE SE
- 17836 108TH AVE SE
- 18010 108TH AVE SE
- 10545 SE CARR RD
- 10623 SE CARR RD
- 17605 108TH AVE SE
- 17809 108TH AVE SE
- 17901 108TH AVE SE
- Parcel 3223059242
- 17803 105TH PL SE
- 17725 105TH PL SE
- 10433 SE CARR RD
- 10436 SE CARR RD
- 10500 SE CARR RD

Preliminary Recommendation: At the Comprehensive Plan level, the City should add new policies in the Land Use element with a map of the new district boundary that includes the area discussed above with policies supporting this proposed Business District. These policies would be similar to those developed for other Business Districts.

Issue Three – Should the Business District Overlay be created for the Commercial Corridor area around Bronson Way North and Sunset Boulevard North?

The Commercial Corridor area around Bronson Way North and Sunset Boulevard North is reflective of other districts where higher intensity uses and higher densities should be encouraged as it is a commercial point served by transit and high volume traffic that provides services to local and sub-regional shoppers.



Attributes of the area: Topographically, the area is generally flat with some upward elevation gain heading north on Sunset Boulevard North. The properties along Sunset Boulevard North are a mix of different commercial uses including vehicle related activities like auto sales and rentals, a variety of retail spaces, some restaurants, and other services. These properties along Sunset are in between two right-of-ways, one for Interstate 405 and the other for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad. The tenant mix around Bronson Way North includes retail, office space, services, and vehicle related activities with a mix of structures including some single family housing, some of which has been converted from residential to commercial use. The main commercial anchors along Bronson Way are the Bryant Motors facilities and the retail shopping center where the Value Village is located. Included in this mix is the Dona Lisa hotel which has been vacated. Most structures are one story with a few multi-story buildings. North of the Commercial Arterial zoned properties along Bronson, zoning designations include Residential 8 and 10. Along Bronson, the area is has developed with a grid like street pattern as compared with the superblock patterns in some of the other Overlays.

The two main traffic arterials carry a significant amount of daily traffic. The City's 2006 bidirectional average daily traffic counts for the area:

- Bronson Way North: The counts vary due to the intersections leading to Bronson from the north. Numbers range between roughly 20,000 and 32,000.
- Sunset Boulevard North: 39,000 to 41,000 with major sources of pass through traffic from Maple Valley Highway and Northeast 3rd Street.

The creation of a Business District in the area is supported by the following:

- Commercial corridor land use designation
- Fits with Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies
- Development and redevelopment potential
- The City wants to create a Business District Overlay in this area
- Property owners are interested in the Overlay
- High traffic counts
- Commercial uses support local and sub-regional customers
- Served by transit

Properties to be included: There are 58 parcels to be included in this Business District Overlay. Where some properties do not have addresses as they have not been developed with a building that has an address, the parcel number has been used. The following is a list of the properties to be included in the overlay:

- 1027 N 1ST ST
- 1020 N 1ST ST
- 117 PARK AVE N
- 119 PARK AVE N
- Parcel 7224000070

- 127 PARK AVE N
- 141 PARK AVE N
- 143 PARK AVE N
- 145 PARK AVE N
- 147 PARK AVE N
- 1011 N 2ND ST
- 148 PARK AVE N
- 144 PARK AVE N
- 140 PARK AVE N
- 130 PARK AVE N
- 1100 BRONSON WAY N
- 1200 BRONSON WAY N
- Parcel 7565100025
- 528 N 1ST ST
- Parcel 7564600350
- 1222 BRONSON WAY N
- Parcel 7564600320
- Parcel 7564600315
- 1300 BRONSON WAY N
- Parcel 1352300005
- 111 MEADOW AVE N
- 1316 BRONSON WAY N
- 118 MEADOW AVE N
- 116 MEADOW AVE N
- 1408 BRONSON WAY N
- 111 FACTORY AVE N
- 115 FACTORY AVE N
- 108 FACTORY AVE N
- 120 FACTORY AVE N
- 151 SUNSET BLVD N
- 203 SUNSET BLVD N
- 219 SUNSET BLVD N
- 225 SUNSET BLVD N
- 233 SUNSET BLVD N
- 239 SUNSET BLVD N
- 311 SUNSET BLVD N
- Parcel 1723059093
- 325 SUNSET BLVD N
- 333 SUNSET BLVD N
- 353 SUNSET BLVD N
- Parcel 0823059109
- Parcel 0823059029
- Parcel 0823059148
- Parcel 9476700010

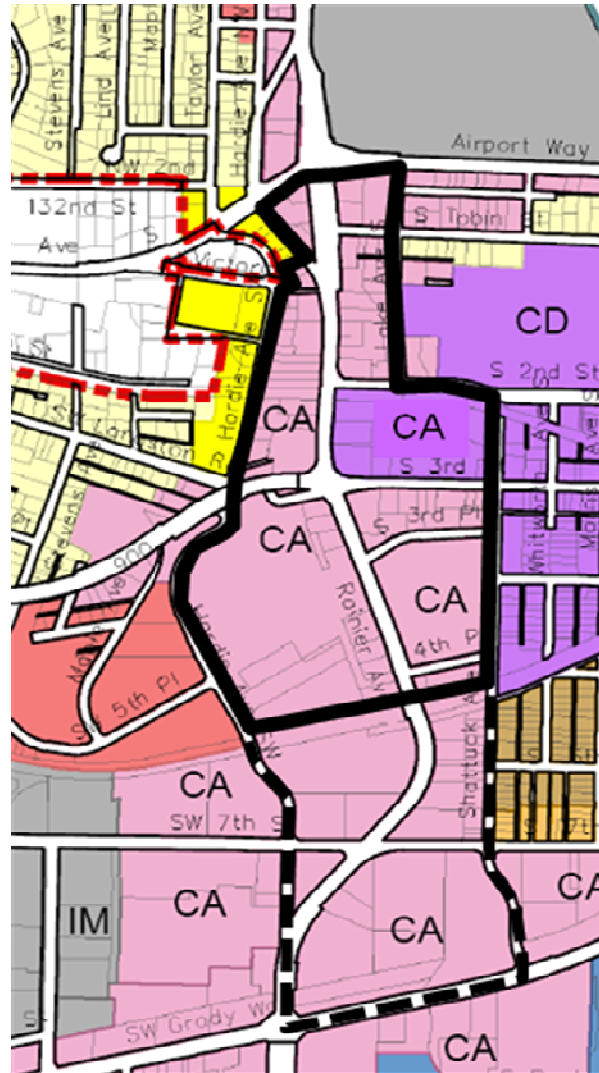
- Parcel 9476700015
- 430 SUNSET BLVD N
- 410 SUNSET BLVD N
- 404 SUNSET BLVD N
- 352 SUNSET BLVD N
- 350 SUNSET BLVD N
- 340 SUNSET BLVD N
- 330 SUNSET BLVD N
- 324 SUNSET BLVD N

Preliminary Recommendation: At the Comprehensive Plan level, the City should add new policies in the Land Use element with a map of the new district boundary that includes the area discussed above with policies supporting this proposed Business District. These policies would be similar to the policies developed for other Business Districts.

Issue Four – Should the Rainier Business District be expanded?

The City and area property owners in the Rainier Avenue Commercial Corridor are interested in expanding the Rainier Avenue Business District Overlay boundaries to cover more of the Rainier Avenue commercial corridor area. Through an expansion of the district, the redevelopment of properties in the area is encouraged through the allowance of 60 dwelling units in mixed use buildings. Amending the District Boundary to allow for this expansion is a way to facilitate redevelopment and a more intense use of properties in the Rainier Commercial Corridor. Mixed use development places potential commercial users within the same building as their residential use as well as increases the number of local shoppers in a commercial area.

Proposed Extension of the District Boundary: The proposed expansion is roughly all Commercial Arterial zoned properties between the current southern boundary of the Business District along the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad right-of-way, south to South Grady Way, between Hardie Avenue Southwest to the west and Shattuck Avenue South to the east. (The lines on the general vicinity map below depict the current Business District boundary with the solid line and the proposed expanded area with the dashed line.)



Attributes of the Expansion Area: The proposed expansion area has a very similar development pattern as the current District Overlay, with a mix of large and smaller parcels, with a more urban street grid pattern. There are some single and multi-family uses along Shattuck in the northeast section of the proposed expansion area. Additionally, there are restaurants on both sides of Rainier and some functioning and no longer functioning auto dealerships in the proposed expansion area. Specifically, the City is interested in encouraging the redevelopment of large vacant parcels where the past Sound Ford and Lincoln Mercury auto dealerships were located as well as the other parcels south to Grady Way. Amending the current District Boundary to include an expanded area of the Rainier Avenue corridor with the allowance of 60 du/acre is a way to facilitate the redevelopment and increased intensity of land uses.

Currently, the Automall “B” Overlay applies to a majority of the properties being considered in this expansion process. This Business District expansion would amend the Automall Overlay boundaries, so the Automall Overlay would be changed and the

Business District Overlay applied, where the Business District Overlay would be the only applicable overlay to these properties.

Properties to be included: There are 33 parcels to be included in this Business District Overlay. Where some properties do not have addresses as they have not been developed with a building that has an address, the Property Identification number has been used. The following is a list of properties to be included in the expanded overlay boundary, where there is no address a parcel number is used:

- 560 HARDIE AVE SW
- Parcel 1823059069
- 20 SW 7TH ST
- 601 RAINIER AVE S
- Parcel 1823059266
- 530 RAINIER AVE S
- 540 RAINIER AVE S
- Parcel 1823059156
- 604 RAINIER AVE S
- 610 RAINIER AVE S
- 650 RAINIER AVE S
- 645 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 641 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 621 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 609 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 605 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 601 SHATTUCK AVE S
- Parcel 1823059180
- 557 SHATTUCK AVE S
- Parcel 1823059137
- 539 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 529 SHATTUCK AVE S
- 528 RAINIER AVE S
- Parcel 1823059136
- 707 RAINIER AVE S
- 710 RAINIER AVE S
- 720 RAINIER AVE S
- 750 RAINIER AVE S
- 200 S GRADY WAY
- Parcel 1923059074
- Parcel 1923059063
- Parcel 201 S 7TH ST
- Parcel 1923059032

Preliminary Recommendation: At the Comprehensive Plan level, the City should amend the Rainier Business District Overlay boundary map in the Land Use element that includes the area discussed above.

Issue Five – Missing Puget Drive Business District map and policies in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element

The Puget Drive Business District had been accidentally left out of the Comprehensive Plan Land Use element when it was last updated. Related policies and the Business District map needs to go back into the Comprehensive Plan as part of this amendment process as the District Overlay currently exists in the municipal code. This is a minor housekeeping item. Here are the discussion, objective and policies for the Business District:

Discussion: *The Puget Corridor is a commercial area along a busy arterial, bordered by multifamily development. It features a mix of retail, office, and service uses.*

Objective: A special commercial area should be designated along South Puget Drive. The purpose of this area would be to enhance the commercial environment to increase revenue of local businesses and the City's tax base.

Policy: Within the Puget Corridor, the "Business District" should and extend from the intersection of Puget Drive and Benson Road S to the I-405 overpass.

Policy: The policies of the Commercial Corridor designation and the Puget Business District should be implemented by Commercial Arterial (CA) zoning.

Policy: Due to its location at a key entrance to the City from the south, the Puget Business District should include gateway features.

Preliminary Recommendation: Add the missing Puget Drive Business District map, boundaries, and related policies into the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element as they existed previously.

NEXT STEPS

- Notify property owners within the two proposed Business Districts and expanding Rainier Business District and property owners abutting or adjacent of the proposed boundaries for each of the three areas.
- Create draft Comprehensive Plan policies and objectives for the two new proposed Business Districts, similar to what is in place for current Business Districts for Commission review at a future meeting.

- Staff will return to the Planning Commission at a future meeting to make final recommendations for the different elements of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment.
- Staff will work with the Planning Commission to establish Public Hearing for all 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendments.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A: Comprehensive Plan objectives and policies related to Business Districts